Alkalinity and Salinity in the Soil

132. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the levels of alkalinity and salinity of soil/land have increased due to regular and excessive use of chemical fertilizers;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to reduce the levels of alkalinity and salinity of land;

(c) whether the discontinuance of chemical fertilizers and use of traditional cow-dung and other bio-manures would result in fall in foodgrain production; and

(d) if so, the method by which Government proposes to enhance production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) The area affected by alkalinity and salinity has increased due to imbalanced and indiscriminate use of chemical fertilizers and unscientific use of soil and water resources.

(b) A new scheme, namely, National Project on Management of Soil Health and Fertility (NPMSHF) has been introduced during 2008-09 to promote soil test based balanced and judicious use of chemical fertilizer in conjunction with organic manure and bio-fertilizer. Financial assistance is also provided for reclamation and development of both alkali and acid soils under various programmes.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Government is promoting Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) envisaging conjunctive use of both inorganic and organic sources of nutrients to sustain good soil health and higher crop productivity in the country.

Shortfall in production of paddy due to drought

133. SHRI K.E. ISMAIL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how many districts have been declared drought affected, State-wise and what kind of helps are being extended by the Centre to these States for relief and rehabilitation;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is a shortfall in the paddy sowing in the country due to the scanty rainfall and drought situation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and expected shortfall in the paddy production thereby;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) 12 States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh have declared 300 districts as affected by drought/scarcity/drought-like situation. State-wise details are indicated below:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

Andhra Pradesh (Drought)	22 districts
Assam (Drought-like situation)	27 districts
Bihar (Drought)	26 districts
Himachal Pradesh (Drought)	12 districts
Jharkhand (Drought)	24 districts
Karnataka (Drought)	20 districts
Madhya Pradesh (Drought)	37 districts
Maharashtra (Drought)	28 districts
Manipur (Drought)	9 districts
Nagaland (Drought-like situation)	11 districts
Rajasthan (Scarcity)	26 districts
Uttar Pradesh (Drought)	58 districts

The details of assistance extended by the Centre to States affected by drought is given in the enclosed Statement (*See* below).

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The coverage of paddy under Kharif Paddy, 2009 remained short by about 6 million ha. than the normal. The harvesting in paddy crop is not yet completed in all the paddy growing States. Reduction in paddy crops would be known once the harvesting is over.

Statement

Short fall in production of paddy due to drought

Help extended by the Government of India to the States to reduce the impact of deficit rainfall situation in the country during 2009 are as follows:

Agriculture :

- Diesel subsidy to the farmers to enable providing supplementary protective irrigation to the standing crops. (50% of the cost of subsidy with cap for Rs.7.50/Htre, given by the States will be borne by the Central Government.)
- Use of Truthful Labelled (TL) seeds, relaxation of age for seed varieties and distribution of minikits allowed to be used by the States under Centrally Sponsored Programmes.
- Additional power from Central pool given to the affected States of Andhra Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Assam to enable timely completion of agricultural operations in the field as well as to save the standing crops.
- States requested to prepare alternate plan for unsown/germination failed areas with short duration/alternate crops and advisories for appropriate crop programme were telecast/ broadcast for the benefit of the farmers through the media.
- Scientists from Indian Council for Agriculture Research, Institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras as well as experts of National Rainfed Area Authority visited the States and helped them in their efforts to counter the impact of deficit rainfall/drought situation on agriculture.

- Zonal Conferences and Rabi Campaign programme with the State Governments were held to enable formulation of appropriate action plan for ensuing Rabi to enhance agricultural production.
- Adequate fund is available under the Centrally Sponsored Programmes, like RKVY, NFSM, NHM, MMA, etc. to take agriculture re-construction programme.

Fodder Position:

- 9.25 lacs Mini-kits were supplied to the States, wherever requisitioned, to help availability of fodder.
- Supply of fodder from Punjab and Haryana to other States in case of fodder deficit was tied up.

Water Resources:

- The existing guidelines for major schemes of the Ministry of Water Resources provide for special consideration to drought prone areas. Central assistance at 90% of the project cost is provided to Irrigation Projects benefiting drought prone areas under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) as well as under the scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of water bodies for their expeditious implementation.
- There is no limit to the number of irrigation projects, which may be funded under AIBP in drought prone areas.
- Central Ground Water Board has been directed to carry out drilling of exploratory wells in drought prone areas on priority.

Assistance under CRF/NCCF :

States have ready availability of funds under Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) to take measures in the wake of natural calamities, including droughts. Besides this the following assistance from NCCF has been approved so far by the Government for 10 States subject to the adjustment of 75% of balance available in their CRF account:

I.	Bihar	:	Rs. 1163.64 crore
II.	Himachal Pradesh	:	Rs. 88.93 crore
III.	Jharkhand	:	Rs. 200.955 crore & Rs. 7.00 crore from special component of ARWSP for repair of damage infrastructure relating to Drinking Water Supply works
IV.	Karnataka	:	Rs. 116.49 crore
V.	Manipur	:	Rs. 14.57 crore
VI.	Madhya Pradesh	:	Rs. 246.31 crore
VII.	Maharashtra	:	Rs.671.88 crore
VIII.	Nagaland	:	Rs. 21.12 crore
IX.	Rajasthan	:	Rs. 1034.84 crore
X.	Uttar Pradesh	:	Rs. 515.05 crore